

Roundtable discussion summary

Moving from policy to action: Success stories on taking the environment and health agenda forward

Title of presentation: Getting Lippy about cosmetics...

Brief description of advocacy campaign or activity:

Linking the concern for certain toxic chemicals in cosmetics to the REACH initiative – although this legislation does not cover cosmetics it will cover certain raw ingredients. Educating consumers about the potentially harmful ingredients used in their cosmetics. Encouraging them to ask questions and write to retailers and manufacturers. Tackling retailers about the products they sell and links between certain ingredients and breast cancer, reproductive disorders, and allergies. Giving workshops, distributing briefings, seminars, media work to raise awareness.

Description of deliverables / outputs:

Briefing document – Getting Lippy. Cosmetics Pack – information on how to do a toxic tour of your bathroom, how to make your own cosmetics, ingredients of concern, list of companies who make greener products, and more. Factsheets- 12 on advertising, baby products, hair straightening, colour cosmetics, making your own cosmetics, hair dye and more. Report – Pretty Nasty.

Description of factors making the activity a success:

Information material, workshops, media exposure, Pretty nasty report on phthalates in cosmetics. *Letting the Genie out of the Bottle*, the seminar which brought together green and mainstream cosmetics and toiletries companies, high street and specialist retailers, environmental groups and consumers to explore what companies are doing already to reduce the use of potentially harmful chemicals and what more they can do.

Lessons learned:

The importance of good research. Spending time in the preparation of materials and workshops. Talking to all stakeholders to learn the issues so you can better present your argument. Looking at the underlying reason why people use these products and also addressing this in the course of the campaigns. For example with cosmetics, women and increasing men and young people feeling social pressure and the strategic marketing by the cosmetics companies playing on our insecurities to sell us their products.

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